

Application No. 09/986,374  
Art Unit 1711  
November 17, 2003  
Reply to Office Action of September 17, 2003

R E M A R K S

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the present application in view of the foregoing amendments to the claims. Prosecution on the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex Parte Quayle*.

In the present amendment, claims 10-17 and 22-25 are canceled, which are non-elected claims. Therefore, claims 1-9 and 18-21 are pending in the present application.

Based upon the above considerations, entry of the present amendment is respectfully requested.

In view of the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to place the instantly pending claims into condition for allowance.

Title

Applicants have amended the title of the present application, as requested by the Examiner in the outstanding Office Action. Entry of this amendment is respectfully requested.

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**Specification and Title Issues**

The Office Action further requests a substitute specification. Applicants submit herewith a substitute specification, where this substitute specification does not add new matter. A marked-up copy of the specification is also enclosed.

**Conclusion**

Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. There remain no outstanding issues. Thus, a timely Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.


Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Eugene T. Perez (Reg. No. 48,501) at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

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If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By   
Andrew D. Meikle, #32,868

ADM/<sup>EP</sup>ETP: bmp  
2809-0123P

P.O. Box 747  
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747  
(703) 205-8000

Attachments: Substitute Specification  
Marked-up Copy of Specification